

AMAA

News

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Representatives of the AMAA and the Armenian Evangelical Unions of France and North America
with His Holiness Vazken I.

OUR ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL HERITAGE

by H. Hrant Agbabian



H. Hrant Agbabian

message:

... To Krikor Loosavorich, or Gregory the Illuminator, who evangelized and helped convert King Drtd and the Armenian nation to Christianity in the third century A.D.;

... To Mesrob Mashdots, who evangelized amongst his people, but felt the need to make the Bible accessible and understandable to all Armenians. He invented the Armenian alphabet, with the blessing and support of Catholicos Sahag Bartev and translated the Bible into Armenian (early fifth century, A.D.);

... To Vartan Mamigonian, who chose to die in defense of his people's freedom of conscience and religion (fifth century, A.D.);

... To numerous other Armenian princes, saints, priests, Catholicos, and other dedicated individuals.

... To Krikor Naregatsi and Nerses Shnorhalee;

... To the leaders of our Evangelical Movement 143 years ago, who established the Armenian Evangelical Church (*Hayasdanyats Avedaranagan Yegeghetsi*) as the honest expression of their faith; and

... To the mothers and fathers who brought up their children in the Christian faith and church, for they believed in the proverb, "Bring up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, will not depart from it."

All of these accomplishments took place despite centuries of persecution and danger of religious and national assimilation—surrounded as we were by hostile and non-Christian nations.

The AMAA is Armenian and missionary in its outreach. As Armenians we are Evangelicals. As Evangelicals we are Armenians. We are not one or the other. We are both. If we reject or minimize one or the other intrinsic element, then we must be honest and disassociate ourselves from the Armenian Evangelical Movement and its church life, as some have, and join other groups—Evangelical communities and churches or secular Armenian organizations as the case may be.

... To our Armenian forefathers who accepted Christ in the first century A.D. through the efforts of Thaddeus and Bartholomew, Jesus' disciples who went to Armenia to spread their master's

As members and officers of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), we try to be faithful to AMAA's proclaimed goals of meeting the physical, educational and spiritual needs of our fellow Armenians. By doing so, I believe that we also become conscious of our own need to revitalize ourselves in our spiritual lives, and, hopefully, to maintain and enhance our knowledge and enjoyment of our Armenian-Christian-Evangelical heritage.

As Armenian Evangelicals, we draw our strength from Jesus and the teachings of our physical and spiritual forefathers.

First and foremost, we praise God for having given us His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, for our eternal salvation, and also for guiding us in facing the complexities and hardships of our daily lives in a loving relationship with our fellow men.

But the transmission of Christ's love and His teachings and loving grace and power came to us through the historical linkage and lineage of our physical forefathers . . .

... To our Armenian forefathers who accepted Christ in the first century A.D. through the efforts of Thaddeus and Bartholomew, Jesus' disciples who went to Armenia to spread their master's

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As leaders of the AMAA, we consciously recognize our Christian and national heritage and, therefore, will strive hard not to allow either element of our dual heritage to be ignored.

Recently I attended the 25th Anniversary Banquet of an Armenian Evangelical Church and was saddened to hear that the Banquet Committee decided that Armenian should not be spoken by the participants during the Banquet. I personally find this kind of attitude tantamount to rejecting centuries of Armenian Christianity that gave rise to our Armenian Evangelical Movement and churches. Are we or aren't we Armenian Evangelicals? If we yearn for and plan to perpetuate our Movement, the Armenian Evangelical Church and the AMAA, we should not be short-sighted and self-centered.

We need to draw strength and inspiration from the treasury of our Christian-Armenian heritage. We must be cognizant of the fact that the Armenian "Mother" church, Armenian language, Armenian food, Armenian music, Armenian literature, etc., have sustained us physically, intellectually and spiritually through the centuries.

Can we afford to be ungrateful to our parents and those who preceded them, who at all costs—even at the cost of their lives—stood steadfast for their faith and national honor?

Armenians, especially the Armenian Evangelicals, are an endangered species, but I believe that in God's beautiful garden we are like a beautiful fragrant flower, or a colorful songbird, or an exotic fish. God wants our fragrance, song and color to survive as His handiwork. We owe it to God our Creator, our forefathers, ourselves, our children and their children to perpetuate our language, culture, heritage and faith, as an integrated totality.

In the history of Armenian Christianity, which is seventeen centuries old, our Armenian Evangelical Movement is merely a child, not even a century and a half in age.

We are different from our "Mother" (Cont. on page 9)

AMAA—AEUNA DELEGATION VISITS ARMENIA Hekemian Brothers Donate \$50,000 to St. Etchmiadzin

From April 2-10, 1989, an Armenian Evangelical delegation visited Armenia to express the support of the Armenian Evangelicals worldwide to the victims of the earthquake of last December; to learn firsthand about the current needs of the survivors; and to identify projects through which the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), the mission and service arm of Armenian Evangelical churches, could share in the reconstruction efforts in Armenia. The delegation included: Mr. Robert Hekemian, AMAA Board Member; The Rev. Karl Avakian, Moderator of AEUNA; The Rev. Jean-Daniel Sahagian, Moderator of the Armenian Evangelical Union of France and President of the Armenian Evangelical World Council; and The Rev. Moses B. Janbazian, Executive Director of the AMAA. It was planned to include a representative of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE) in the delegation, but the renewed fighting in Lebanon, made this impossible.

The delegation arrived in Yerevan via Moscow on Monday night, April third. They were warmly welcomed as the guests of His Holiness Vazken I and lodged at St. Etchmiadzin. The morning after their arrival, the delegates visited the disaster areas—Leninakan, Spitak, Stepanavan and many villages between these cities. "The devastation is almost beyond human comprehension—the destruction and losses are beyond description. The comments and stories of the survivors in the affected areas attest to the unimaginable grief and suffering caused by this catastrophe. Two themes that kept recurring in these accounts were gratitude for help from abroad and a determination to rebuild their homeland," stated Rev. Janbazian in his report to the AMAA Board of Directors.

The Evangelical delegation had the opportunity to meet several times with His Holiness Vazken I, who expressed his appreciation for the relief efforts of the Armenian Evangelicals, Christian churches and ecumenical bodies throughout the world and discussed the relief work and the rebuilding efforts that are in



Rev. Karl Avakian, Moderator of AEUNA, presenting Chalice and paten to His Holiness Vazken I.

progress. The group also discussed with the Catholicos the status and needs of the Armenian Evangelical churches in Armenia. The information and comments he shared demonstrated both a clear knowledge of and a genuine concern for the needs of the Armenian Evangelical churches of Yerevan and Leninakan. He stated that he considers the Armenian Evangelical community as an inseparable part of his people, and that he maintains their interests in his heart and in his endeavors.

Moved by his stay at St. Etchmiadzin and his experiences in Armenia, Mr. Hekemian, on behalf of himself, his brother, Samuel, and their respective families, spontaneously donated \$50,000 to the St. Etchmiadzin Monastery. This sum was to be used at the discretion of His Holiness. In presenting this gift to His Holiness Vazken I, Mr. Hekemian said,

"This is a token of my appreciation for the moving experience of my first visit to St. Etchmiadzin . . . a place where our forefathers have worshipped God since 301 A.D. . . . a place which symbolizes the enduring and unshakable Christian faith of our people." Soon after the ear-

quake, the Hekemian Brothers had made a generous contribution of \$100,000 to the AMAA's Armenian Earthquake Relief Fund.

On behalf of the Armenian Evangelical community of North America, Rev. Avakian presented to His Holiness a silver and gold chalice and paten as a token of admiration for his capable and all-embracing spiritual leadership, and appreciation of the vital significance of St. Etchmiadzin for the Christian faith of all Armenians.

On behalf of the AMAA, Rev. Janbazian presented His Holiness with a \$15,000 check as a contribution to St. Etchmiadzin's relief efforts for the victims of the earthquake. Rev. Janbazian expressed the desire and hope that this visit would not remain an isolated event, but would mark the beginning of a lasting relationship and a closer cooperation between the Armenian Evangelical churches and St. Etchmiadzin.

During their six days in Armenia, the Evangelical delegates had informative and helpful meetings with a number of church leaders and government officials, including First Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Levon Sahagian; Chief of the Depart-



Mr. Robert Hekemian presenting a check for \$50,000 to His Holiness Vazken I, as a gift from the Hekemian Family to St. Echmiadzin.



Rev. Moses Janbazian with the Directors of the Sovedashen Psychiatric Hospital, Dr. Norair Darpinian (left) and Dr. Samuel Torosian (right).

ment of Foreign Economic Relations, Mr. Vasili Kh. Kazarian; Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, Mr. Stepan H. Vardanian; Minister of Breadproducts, Mr. Raphael Tatevosovich Shahbazian; Chairman of Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad (CCRAA), Mr. Karlen Dallakian; Director of the American sector of CCRAA, Mr. Hravir S. Babayan; General Director of Science and Products of the Ministry of Breadproducts, Mr. Ashot Charchoglian; Directors of the Sovedashen Psychiatric Hospital, Dr. Samuel Torosian and Dr. Norair Tarpinian; the pastors of the Armenian Evangelical Baptist Churches of Yerevan, Leninakan and Tiflis, The Reverends Yuri Avanesian, Krikor Malakian and Souren Harutuanian; the Prelate of Leninakan, Bishop Nareg Shakarian; and the Chancellor of St. Etchmiadzin, Archbishop Nerses Bozabalian. The delegation was received warmly and given ample time for discussions concerning relief work, current needs and rebuilding plans and efforts.

The observations of the AMAA delegates and the representatives of the Evangelical churches included the following:

- The leadership of the country is interested in the current and the long-term needs of Armenia, both for its people and its economy. Of special concern is the rebuilding of the industrial and agricultural sectors in order to provide employment and bring a semblance of normal life to the people, and eventually reintroduce the country into the

mainstream of the economic system of the Soviet Union.

- The two nuclear power plants that served as the major sources of energy have been shut down since mid-March. This has reduced the country's energy supply drastically and will further hamper the economic recovery of the country.

- Psychiatric help is cited as another striking and urgent need. Thousands of children and adults are suffering from psychiatric problems and psychological trauma. If psychiatric help is delayed, many children will turn into nonproductive, emotionally detached, pessimistic and depressed adults.

- The earthquake has claimed the lives of more children than adults, proportionally, because the quake struck when schools were in session. School buildings collapsed and buried unsuspecting children under tons of rubble. This explains why there are fewer orphans, proportionally, than parents who have lost their children. Most orphans are being cared for by relatives. Many families in Armenia have offered to adopt and care for any remaining orphans. The AMAA is developing a special program to help the orphans and their guardian families.

- At the Orthopedic Hospital in Yerevan most facilities and equipment appeared old and in poor condition. There is an urgent need for new equipment and better training for the physical therapy department. In one room of the hospital, the delegates saw scores of injured children, with parents and relatives in attendance, being given the rites of baptism

and christening by two priests from St. Etchmiadzin. The name given to one seven-year-old boy summed up the tragic story of many children like him . . . he was baptized as "Mnatzagan" (The Remnant), indicative of the fact that he alone among his brothers and sisters had survived the earthquake.

- The Megardich Armen School in Leninakan operates in a dozen tents. Half of its 423 students attend classes in the morning and the other half in the afternoon. Almost 90% of the school buildings in the area have been destroyed. The teachers, reflecting the difficulty of teaching traumatized children in makeshift quarters, looked tired and overburdened.

- The Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Leninakan, though badly damaged, is still in service. It is an old house converted into a small hall with 96 chairs. This modest structure serves as a "parent church" for the small Evangelical communities in the surrounding towns and villages.

- The Armenian Evangelical Baptist Church of Yerevan has about 400 members. The church building is old and too small for the congregation, so there are two services on Sundays—one in the morning and another in the evening. The members of the congregation have helped in the relief effort by opening their homes, providing food, distributing clothing and making monetary gifts to homeless families from the affected areas.

- The Soviet authorities have recently allowed the creation of public charitable



Clockwise: The Evangelical delegation with Mr. Stepan Vardanian, Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs. Members of the Armenian Evangelical delegation with First Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr. Levon Sahagian; Chairman of Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad, Mr. Karlen Dallakian; and Chief of Foreign Economic Relations, Mr. Vasili Kazarian. Makeshift school in Leninakan. Mnatzagan (The Remnant), the only survivor among the members of a family from Spitak.

organizations. One such organization, "Ktoutiune," was founded in Armenia last October. Its members are active in distributing relief supplies and caring for the needy, including the 200,000 or more Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan. The plight of these displaced people, although overshadowed by the earthquake disaster, is no less pitiful and desperate.

- The Karabagh issue is still in the minds and daily conversation of people everywhere. The imprisonment of the Karabagh Committee and the ignoring of Armenian grievances has bitterly disappointed all Armenians.

- Apparently, the massive scope of the disaster is making it difficult for the Armenian government to prepare a detailed, clear and comprehensive plan of reconstruction. A major problem is the coordination of the responsibilities and

the work of different departments and ministries. The report of the delegates pointed out that, "nevertheless, the vision, commitment and tireless efforts of the leadership deserve commendation."

The delegates, in light of their observations and the conclusions drawn from their many meetings and conversations, have drawn up a list of specific proposals to be submitted to the AMAA Board of Directors, which will be considered and acted upon at a special meeting of the full Board on June 3.

In his report to the AMAA Board of Directors, Rev. Janbazian concluded, "Rebuilding the destroyed cities, towns, villages, schools, hospitals, factories and the very lives of the earthquake survivors is a long-range and an overwhelming task, which, even after its completion, will not completely heal the wounds caused by

this disaster. This catastrophe has already had its lasting imprint on the Armenian psyche, similar to the one caused by the genocide of 1915, which will fade but slowly over time. Yet there are many reasons for hope. The endurance, persistence and determination of our people, so evident throughout Armenia, inspire one with a renewed confidence that with the help of national and foreign governments, international relief organizations, and especially the Armenians in the diaspora, the Armenian people will overcome this disaster, continue to prosper and remain the faithful trustee of that precious piece of land destined by God to be our *Hairenik*. May God help us to persevere in our assistance and meet, with dedication and humility, the challenge of rebuilding our shattered Homeland."

ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL ACTIVITIES IN GREECE

Editor's Note: The following report on the activities of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of Kokkinia and Derghouty (Athens), Greece, has been sent to the AMAA by the Rev. Meher Khachigian whose ministry in Greece is supported through the gifts of the members and friends of the AMAA.

We give many thanks to God for all the spiritual and financial support He has provided us with.

Every penny that falls in the Lord's field seems to be blessed, as it grows, blossoms and in time bears bountiful fruit. This is what we witness in our everyday lives. Every day our prayers are softening more stony hearts.

Due to the tragic earthquake in our homeland last December, many of our activities were postponed.

As we had written to you earlier, we were planning to dedicate a monument in memory of Rev. Krikor Demirjian, on January 15, 1989, on the fourth anniversary of his passing away, but the event was rescheduled for May 21, 1989.

Just as the Armenian churches throughout the world held memorial services and requiem masses, we also held a memorial service on the Sunday following the earthquake to honor our many brothers and sisters and innocent children who perished in that tragedy.

Meanwhile, the landscaping around our church has been completed, with bushes, flowers and grassy areas forming a beautiful setting for the church.

We pulled down the old garage and replaced it with a sheltered playground where children can enjoy the outdoors on rainy days. The church's sports ground is just about finished. It will be available to all Armenians, without discrimination, so that different Armenian groups can come, practice and play.

Our children's playground is equipped with modern swings, slides and merry-go-rounds. This playground is available not only to our kindergarten school children, but to children from the Armenian (Orthodox) school as well.

We are pleased that a good number of refugee Armenian families from Iran have managed to emigrate to the United



Children of the Armenian Evangelical Kindergarten of Kokkinia.

States. Many other families, of course, are still waiting and are living under difficult conditions. We try to help them by providing food, milk, medicines and heating oil. On holidays we distribute food packages to help them out. Periodically we organize gatherings so that we can get to know them better, listen to their problems and see how we can be more helpful to them.

On Vartanantz Day we held a banquet in our church hall for our Sunday School children and their parents. About 70 people attended.

We continue to hold Sunday services in both of our Evangelical churches. Women's prayer meetings, under the leadership of Mrs. Khachigian, have resumed in the Kokkinia church, so that both churches now hold such meetings.

The Sunday School children from our church in Derghouty—who are mostly Iranian-Armenians—visit us once a month to participate in our church service with their hymns, psalm recitations and prayers.

Every Friday and Sunday we have Christian endeavor and Bible study

meetings. Our youth, with their four-part choir, enrich these meetings. On the occasion of Christian Endeavor Day, the young people conducted the services in both of our churches. For our kindergarten school we recently acquired an organ. We also acquired a cassette player so that the children can listen to and enjoy appropriate tapes. We plan to buy a television set and a VCR for the entertainment and edification of our children. In our kindergarten school, we continue to serve fruit juice, milk and cookies to the children.

Our two churches and the Athens church, with the help of their youth groups, women's groups and other participants, have collected a goodly sum for Armenian earthquake relief.

Please express our greetings, and thanks, to the Board of Directors and the members of the Armenian Missionary Association of America. Their prayers, and especially their financial support, makes our mission in Greece possible. We are, indeed, grateful for their gift of fellowship, encouragement and practical assistance.

PROF. BABIKIAN HONORED BY HIS STUDENTS OF ALEPPO COLLEGE

"For fifty years, you gave us grades based on our performance in school. Tonight, however, the roles are reversed and we will give you grades. . ." said George Aprahamian of Los Angeles to his former mathematics professor during an unusual banquet at the Brookside Club House restaurant in Pasadena on May 7, 1989.

"Prof. Babikian was like an Army General. We called him the 'military man' of Aleppo College," observed one of his former students who had travelled all the way from San Jose, CA, to honor his former teacher. "Even the Arab teachers were scared of him when they saw that stern look on his face. They said, 'don't mess with that Armenian General. You will definitely regret it!'"

More than 300 successful engineers, architects, scientists, professors, doctors and attorneys (ages between 45-65, all former students of Prof. Babikian) and their spouses attended the 50th teaching anniversary celebration of a unique professor, who had earned the high esteem and admiration of many academicians in Syria as an intellectual, as well as a person, who had contributed tremendously in the advancement of educational standards in Aleppo, Syria. His personality had left a lasting impression on Syrian authorities as well as on the multitude of students who now live all over the world. Former students, however, upon learning that the Aleppo College Alumni Association and the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) had joined to honor the veteran educator, made a special effort to come and attend the testimonial. Many among his students recognized that even though Prof. Babikian had only taught them mathematics, he had instilled in them sound moral and ethical principles, had taught them the meaning of success and had helped build their characters.

At the time when Dr. Babikian taught, Aleppo College had a substantial enrollment of Armenian students, the majority of whom subsequently moved to the United States and Canada. The College was an American educational institution and Dr. Babikian was one of the few



Members of the Executive Committee of the Aleppo College Alumni Association flanking the honoree, Prof. Babikian and his wife, Alice.

teachers there who was able to stir the thinking process of students.

Among the many students who attended the college, there are many who are affiliated with the AMAA. Thus, together with the Aleppo College Alumni Association, the AMAA established the "Souren Babikian Educational Endowment Fund," the proceeds of which were to be used for the Haigazian College of Beirut, Lebanon.

Festivities

The evening festivities started on a very happy note as many guests met their old classmates from college days whom they had not seen in years. Following the dinner, guests enjoyed a fine musical entertainment provided by Mrs. Lucina Agbabian-Hubbard and Jack Chitjian, accompanied on the piano by George Chamichian.

John Maybalian, president of the Aleppo College Alumni Association, welcomed the guests, introduced guests at the dais and turned over the program to Hrant Agbabian, who acted as the Master of Ceremonies.

Mr. Agbabian paid tribute to Prof. Babikian and his wife Alice and called on a host of former students to offer brief testimonials to their former teacher.

The program was full of surprises. Half of his students showered him with praise while the other half "roasted" him with "reminders" which they did not dare tell him years ago while they were students. They teased him throughout the night by revealing "old secrets" and telling jokes and amusing everyone in the audience.

"No one has ever accused Mr. Babikian of being a 'soft touch,'" said one of his students. "He never liked misdemeanors and made sure no one misbehaved during his classes."

After a series of humorous testimonials to their teacher, Rev. Dr. Yeghia Babikian, another former student, delivered the keynote speech. Dr. Babikian, no kin to the guest of honor, offered an inspiring speech and praised Prof. Souren Babikian for his achievements in the field of education.

Dr. Mihran Agbabian, a prominent professor and currently chairman of Engineering Department at U.S.C., in his delivered remarks observed that there were not many inspiring teachers like Prof. Babikian. "While we were thinking about different things and issues, he was always speaking of celestial calculations or about people like Descartes, Pascal, Anton Chekov, and others. He was a

walking encyclopedia who knew everything."

Native of Aintab

Dr. Babikian was born in Aintab, Turkey, in 1913. His father was a self-taught attorney who could resolve very complicated legal matters in the 1880's. After the 1915 Genocide, the family moved to Syria and young Souren attended the American educational institution that preceded the creation of Aleppo College. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from London through a correspondence course.

Upon graduation, he started teaching mathematics and made his class so interesting that even those who hated algebra, geometry and math, were eagerly waiting to take courses from him.

In 1953, Dr. Babikian came to the United States as an exchange teacher and met Dr. Alford Carleton, who was formerly the president of Aleppo College. Through his recommendation, he found a teaching job at Los Angeles City College, where he taught mathematics for 27 years. During this time, he met his future wife, Alice Nazarian, and after his retirement in 1983, he was awarded with a certificate from City College in recognition of his distinguished services to the college.

Dr. Babikian believes that "Mathematics is the mirror of civilization" and is not only needed in accounting, science and engineering, but is very important in the advancement of civilization. "If we go back to the Stone Age, and move back



Dr. Rendel Levonian, Chairman of Haigazian College Board of Trustees and AMAA Board member, presenting the AMAA's Certificate of appreciation plaque to Prof. Babikian.

into the future, we can see atomic bombs through math generated atomic energy. Math is instrumental in scientific experiments, inventing radio waves and connections," he explained.

His knowledge, however, is not limited strictly to mathematics. Anyone visiting his home will see up to 6,000 books on shelves, tables, floors and corridors, with subjects ranging from medicine to world history. His wife also seems to enjoy and share with him his interests as she too is an avid reader.

The veteran educator believes that it is time for all Armenian churches, community leaders, organizations and educational institutions to come together and

educate the new immigrants about the laws of this country. "Anyone who wants to become a U.S. citizen must know that with citizenship comes responsibility and the law reigns high."

The evening concluded with the guest of honor thanking everyone for honoring him. Dr. Babikian was presented with a beautiful silver tray with an inscription on it, in appreciation of 50 years of service in teaching. He was also awarded with an AMAA Certificate of Appreciation Plaque which was presented by Dr. Rendel Levonian, Chairman of the Board of Trustees of Haigazian College.

Rose Demirjian

SONA MELIDONIAN RECOGNIZED AS OUTSTANDING TEACHER

Sona Melidonian of Clifton, NJ, was recently recognized as an outstanding teacher through the New Jersey Governor's Teacher Recognition Program. She was chosen for this honor because of her exceptional contributions as a teacher in the public school system of New Jersey. Her selection was by vote of the Clifton Public School's Selection Panel, comprised of members of the Board of Education, administrators, teachers and parents. Miss Melidonian was awarded a check in the amount of \$3,000 to be used in her name for educational purposes in the Clifton School district.



Sona Melidonian

The award, along with a letter of commendation from Governor Thomas H. Kean, was presented to Miss Melidonian at the Governor's Convocation on Excellence in Teaching on May 10, 1989, at Princeton University's Jadwin Gymnasium. Invited guests included Governor Thomas H. Kean, state legislators, State Board of Education members, 1981 National Teacher of the Year Jay Sommer, Department of Education officials and leaders representing the various education associations throughout the State of New Jersey.

INCREASED SUFFERING IN WAR-RAVAGED LEBANON

The situation in Lebanon is going from bad to worse. In spite of their periodic cease-fire announcements, the warring factions (Syrian Army/Moslem militiamen and Lebanese Army/Phalangist militiamen) continue to bomb the Christian and Moslem halves of Beirut, indiscriminately. Months of cruel fighting have already resulted in the loss of many lives, hundreds of wounded, massive destruction and miserable living conditions for thousands of innocent people in Beirut.

After many attempts, the Executive Director of the AMAA was finally able to communicate, via Cyprus, with the Chairman of the Central Committee of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in the Near East (UAECNE). Here are some highlights of the situation in Beirut:

- At least a dozen Armenians have been killed in the bombardments.
- The Armenian Evangelical Central Church of Ashrafieh and the Central High School have received direct rocket hits and have sustained significant damage. Other churches and schools, including the Christian Medical Center building of Haigazian College, have sustained minor damage—mainly, shattered windows.
- All schools, including Haigazian College, have been closed since March 8.
- Many business places and shops, as well as homes, have been destroyed or damaged.
- Throughout the 14-year civil war crisis, the situation has not been as critical as it is now.
- There is no water or electricity in Beirut. Bread and gasoline are very scarce.

● People face an uncertain future, and feel desperate and helpless as never before. Many are using tranquilizers to be able to cope with the terror of exploding bombs and rockets. Children and adults are suffering from mental breakdowns.

● In addition to the fear of death and the psychological effects of the indiscriminate shelling, people suffer from serious food shortages. The poor and the working, wage-earning class are suffering the most. Many families are faced with real want . . . hunger!

The UAECNE Central Committee, after the example of the Karaghuesian and Jinishian organizations, and the Armenian Apostolic Prelacy of Lebanon, is distributing food parcels to 200 impoverished families through the Armenian Evangelical Churches and the Armenian Evangelical Social Service Center of Trad (Bourj Hamoud). The AMAA is helping in this emergency "life-saving" endeavor, and has already rushed, via Cyprus, all available funds earmarked for General Relief. But the need is great, and more funds are needed to help meet the survival needs of our impoverished families in Beirut.

In light of the foregoing, we request that our members and friends consider this brief update as a most urgent appeal for their help. We are aware of the many and heavy demands the earthquake in Armenia and other needs put on our ever-giving and generous people this year. Yet, we are compelled to seek the help of our members knowing that "God is not so unjust as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name, in having ministered and is still ministering to the saints." (Hebrews 6:10).

DATA GENERAL CORP. DONATES \$15,000 FOR ARMENIA RELIEF



Mr. John Kavazanjian (right), Vice President of Data General Corporation of Westboro, MA, presenting a \$15,000 check to Mr. Berge Tashjian, Esq., a long time AMAA supporter, as Data General's contribution to the AMAA's Earthquake Relief Fund.

HAIGAZIAN COLLEGE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY DONATES \$30,000

Celebrating their 25th anniversary, the Haigazian College Women's Auxiliary of Los Angeles, CA, conveyed \$25,000 to the Trustees of that institution.

The Auxiliary's beneficence is a result of the gala dinner and art auction honoring Harry Naltchayan at Lakeside Country Club on March 18. These funds will be used to support the College, whose impact continues to prevail at a most critical time in Lebanon. A raffle for a signed Carzou lithograph, "Les Champs Elysees", netted \$5,000 for earthquake relief. The winning ticket, drawn by Mr. Naltchayan, was held by Diana Abdulian, who coincidentally was celebrating her birthday. This \$5,000 will be used to provide art therapy for children in Leninakan, where classes are now being held in makeshift tents.

For a quarter of a century, the Auxiliary has maintained an unparalleled commitment to Haigazian College and expects to continue its support as long as the College exists.

The Women's Auxiliary was founded primarily through the efforts of Mrs. Virginia Harikian twenty-five years ago in Los Angeles, CA. The Board of Directors of the AMAA and the Board of Trustees of Haigazian College marked the occasion by presenting to Mrs. Harikian a plaque of appreciation inscribed as follows: "A Loving Tribute to Virginia Harikian, for her life-long fellowship in the worldwide outreach of the AMAA and outstanding services rendered with pioneering spirit and unselfish devotion to the mission of Haigazian College."

EDWIN ALBERIAN

Edwin Alberian of Weehawken, NJ, is a children's specialist—that is, he has spent a lifetime entertaining children in schools, hospitals and privately. On May 21, he left for his third trip to Armenia, where he will perform for children in the earthquake area as Dokey the Clown. Recognizing Alberian's unique talent, the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) is sponsoring Edwin's trip.

In the U.S., Edwin has delighted thousands of youngsters with his clown routines, at the same time promoting



Edwin Alberian

nutrition, discouraging the eating of junk food and denouncing drugs. In Armenia his procedure will be different: instead of working with children in groups, he said, "I'll be doing my specialty at the bedside of each patient, and leave each one a gift. I will entertain at schools, now being conducted in tents, and do shows on the streets, like a block party." Edwin followed a similar procedure last year in Yerevan and it was very successful.

"I feel what I have to offer is a unique quality," Alberian said. "The whole world is trying to help the victims materially, but I hope my visit will be of an uplifting, spiritual quality. The fact that I'm Armenian and speak to the children in their own language helps."

JOHN AND MICHELE SIMOURIAN DONATE \$25,000 TO ARMENIA RELIEF

Mr. and Mrs. John Simourian of Dover, MA, have generously donated

\$25,000 to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) to be allocated for Armenia Relief. John and Michele are longtime members and supporters of the AMAA and its various ministries. The Simourians have also placed the trucks of John's company, the Boston-based Lily Truck Leasing, Inc., at the disposal of the AMAA for the transportation of goods destined for Armenia Relief.

Michele Simourian is an AMAA Board member. She and John are AMAA goodwill ambassadors "par excellence", as they brings the AMAA's activities and projects to the attention of their many friends throughout New England.

COMMENDATION FOR ARMENIAN EVANGELICAL SOCIAL SERVICE CENTER

On March 31, 1989, officials of the Armenian Evangelical Social Service Center of Hollywood, in Los Angeles, CA, met with City Supervisor Michael Antonovich. Those attending included: Zabelle Alahydoian, Directress of the Center; Kay Zoolalian, Chairperson; and Joyce Stein, along with Hratch Baliozian, former chairman of the Center.

Mr. Antonovich commended the Center for providing urgent services to



Supervisor Antonovich flanked by Mrs. Joyce Stein (left) and Mrs. Zabelle Alahydoian.

acculturate the newly arrived Soviet Armenian refugees. He stressed the need for even more social support and hoped that additional programs might be funded by the County of Los Angeles Board of Supervisors.

The Social Service Center is grateful for the City's and its Supervisors' public support. Without this help, the Center would not be able to function in its all-inclusive manner.

The Armenian Evangelical Social Service Center of Hollywood, CA, serves the needs of newly arrived Armenians in a Christian atmosphere.

The dedicated staff includes 11 teachers, an immigration caseworker, a

social services caseworker, the English-as-a-Second Language Coordinator, two secretaries and the Director. Over 440 people per month are being served in social services and 600 students have been enrolled in the ESL Department.

Deep concern for earthquake relief was expressed by substantial donations from staff, students and concerned friends. These free will offerings, totalling \$6,100, were conveyed to the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA).

The Center hopes to broaden its ministry by establishing counseling programs for parents and children, perhaps expanding to home visitations and providing the spiritual and emotional support which many of these new immigrants desperately need.

MISSION NOTES FROM ALEPPO

The following is an excerpt from a letter received recently from the Rev. Barkev Apartian, Director of the AMAA-Supported Church of Christ Mission Center.

Dear Members and Friends of the Armenian Missionary, I would like to take this opportunity to express my hearty thankfulness for the following: At this time, once again, I thank the AMAA Board for the kind help given to me for the costs of my eye treatments and related expenses over the past several years. Especially, I am very thankful for the fact that during my last treatment in August/September, 1988, you were considerate enough to have my hospitalization bills postponed until the final settlement. Then, as before, you offered your substantial support along with JMP, ACO and the Union, to initiate and continue these treatments. I thank you full-heartedly for myself, as well as on behalf of my colleagues for the generous grants you have allocated for us pastors, as I believe it has helped greatly to rebuild our confidence and reassure us of your brotherly concern for the work and church workers in this part of the world.

Furthermore, I want to thank you happily for the very significant financial support you have been providing for the Church of Christ Bethesda Dispensary, both for general medicine and the Dental Clinic. May I assure you that I will send you copies of our report on these relief programs in due time. Finally, I would like



The Christian Endeavor Youth Group of Aleppo.

to express our deep gratitude and continued appreciation, personally as well as on behalf of our community leaders, for all kinds of regular and special aid programs sponsored by the AMAA Board and provided by the very kind and concerned members and friends of the great AMAA family.

I do praise God for this blessed and meaningful friendship which as a tangible expression of the love and saving power of the Lord, Jesus Christ, has become a source of manifold blessings to our people here. Thank you so much and the Lord bless your hearts. One more special thanks for the friendly greetings and encouraging words you sent us recently with Dr. Alexander Sulahian, who shared with us his happy experience of having had fellowship with you.

LETTER OF THANKS FROM A SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT

Many things go unnoticed in the day-to-day life of a college student: the moral support of the family back home, the good wishes of friends and relatives, even the dinners that the college cafeteria staff keep warm for us after late exams. Such actions are often taken for granted, not intentionally, of course, but because the pressure of our studies and our anxiety toward the future often cloud our appreciation for them. But now that I have graduated and "landed" my first real job, I would like to show my thanks for one act that helped make all this possible: The AMAA's generous financial support during my college years.

I understand that the AMAA scholarships and loans were designed to further the potential of the Armenian youth in this country. But by awarding these monies, you are not only giving us a fighting chance to advance, but are expressing your faith in our capacity to excel in society. For this faith, I thank you.

The scholarships you awarded filled the gap at an uncertain time in my college career. My father's then-critical illness generated a financial crisis that adversely affected my ability to meet my tuition requirements. There was even a time when I was considering delaying college until the family situation stabilized. But with your timely help, I was able to graduate with a B.S. in Biochemistry and a Minor in Political Science. Now I am a Chemist at Litton Potentiometer, a division of Litton Industries, being trained to become a new Director of Research and Development.

Again, this would not have been possible without your assistance. Therefore, I would like to express my appreciation by donating a portion of my first paycheck to the AMAA. I am hopeful that I will be able to contribute more to the AMAA Scholarship Fund in the future.

Thank you again. I will never forget your kindness.

Samuel H. Megerditchian

MRS. HILDA NYUYUKIAN

It is with profound sorrow that we announce the passing away of Mrs. Hilda Nuyukian, the wife of The Rev. Dr. Soghomon Nuyukian, on Thursday, May 25, 1989, at the age of 58. Mrs. Nuyukian was in ill health for the past several months with cancer. Funeral services were held on Saturday, May 27. Officiating was the Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA), The Rev. Moses B. Janbazian. Other participants included The Rev. Karl Avakian, The Rev. John Mokkosian, Dr. H. Philip Hovnanian, Mr. Set Mornjian, The Rev. Dr. Eugene Grau and Mr. Vartkes Cholakian.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts are assigned to the AMAA.

The AMAA Board of Directors and the office staff join in extending to Rev. Nuyukian and his family, as well as the Cholakian family, sincere sympathies.

OBITUARIES

DR. ELIAZAR A. SHIRAJIAN



Editor's Note: The following tribute to Dr. Eliazar Shirajian was given on the occasion of his passing by Rev. H. Karjian and was subsequently published in Chanasser.

Dr. Eliazar Shirajian was born in 1902 in Marash, Turkey. We know what it means to have been born before 1915. By the grace of God the young Eliazar was saved from the fires of the Great Genocide.

Another grace of God was his birth in Rev. Aaron and Lucia Shirajian's family. Few people realize what it means to be born in a pastor's family. Still fewer comprehend the meaning of being born and brought up under the familial roof of Rev. Aaron Shirajian. Long before the Great Genocide, the Reverend had experienced the brutality and unhealthy sadism of Turks in the cells of Turkish prisons and elsewhere. It cost him dear, his faith in Christ and his love of Armenians.

Dr. Shirajian was nurtured in the positive atmosphere of ancestral noble values; and received an education enriching his horizon of knowledge and interests.

Another grace of God was his marrying Miss Yester Mugrditchian in Aleppo with the benediction of his father, Rev. Shirajian. They formed a model family, ebullient with their fathers' faith and blessed with paternal benediction. Their daughters, Lucille Gullessarian and Nora Copeland, reside respectively in Cyprus and the U.S.A.

Dr. Eliazar was a churchman in the full meaning of the word. He was known not only for attending regularly devotional services but also as a conscientious member attentive to details and following up problems. With this spirit he served on the Church Board of the Armenian First Church in Beirut as well as on the Board of Managers of Haigazian College.

As a family man, the deceased demonstrated a particular discreet interest in bringing

up his daughters, giving to them what he had and always emphasizing with them. He was a loving and self-sacrificing husband and father, creating an atmosphere of love and cooperation with spiritual meaning.

Dr. Shirajian was also a man of public life and service. Long before the existence of Social Service committee she played an active role in various phases of public life. He served as a member of the Board of the National Sanatorium in Azounieh and for years voluntarily took care of the dental health of students at the Armenian Evangelical College.

We give thanks to God for the life of this servant of the Lord. His zeal to do his best in his dental profession is easily understood. But in the spiritual realm the motto "the best for God" can be applied only for those who have been subjected to the influence of the Holy Spirit. The crown of glory for this kind of people is "Well done, thou good and faithful servant . . . enter thou into the joy of the Lord." Dr. Shirajian's last words were, "In the arms of my Saviour . . .," which he repeated again and again. His soul rested in his Savior's arms on May 13, 1988, after a short illness.

He is survived by his wife, Yester E. Shirajian, for many years a teacher, librarian and dean of women students at the Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut; daughters Lucille V. Gullessarian of Larnaca, Cyprus, and Professor Nora S. Copeland, a librarian at Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado; and two granddaughters, Eileen V. Gullessarian, an accountant for an offshore company in Larnaca and Doreen V. Gullessarian, a microbiology student at California State University, Long Beach, CA.

NESHAN BELOYAN

Editor's Note: We regret that two lines had fallen from the obituary of Neshan Beloyan in the February, 1989 issue of the AMAA NEWS. Below is the corrected text of the obituary.

Neshan Beloyan of Newton Square, PA, made the transition from this life to Life Eternal on October 8, 1988, at the age of 87. He was the husband of the late Grace Beloyan. Surviving are his daughter Rose Gallagher (wife of Anthony); son Lionel (husband of Elizabeth); and grandchildren Denise Rose and Deborah Grace Gallagher, and Mark Bedros and Stephen Avedis Beloyan.

Interment was private, but relatives and friends attended a Memorial Service for Edward on Saturday, February 11, 1989, at the First Presbyterian Church of Ardmore, PA.

VEHANOUSH MELKONIAN



Mrs. Vehanoush Melkonian went home to be with the Lord on Wednesday, January 11, 1989. It was a sudden departure and yet our God makes no mistakes. Vehanoush loved God's Word and the Psalter and Hymns of Praise. In the past few years she only had partial sight and enjoyed Armenian messages on tape which were sent to her.

Mrs. Melkonian was the last survivor in her immediate family (Saradjians) from the Armenian genocide. She was born in Mersin, Turkey, in 1908 and came to Cyprus when she was a teenager. In the early 1960's, she and her husband immigrated to the United States and settled in the suburbs of Chicago. Vehanoush was a loving wife and mother and in her untiring way she exemplified godly concern for her family. God had given her special gifts in knitting and she used these for His glory. Devoted to her Savior, Vehanoush shared Him with all who came into her life.

MR. EDWARD N. ADOURIAN

Edward N. Adourian of Brookall, PA, passed away on February 8, 1989. Edward was the husband of the late Janet Adourian. He is survived by his children, Mr. Edward N. Adourian, Jr. and Mrs. Linda Adourian Powell; two sisters, Mrs. Angele Adourian Bedrossian Hancock and Mrs. Grace Adourian Kalyan; five grandchildren; and one great grandchild.

Interment was private, but relatives and friends attended a Memorial Service for Edward on Saturday, February 11, 1989, at the First Presbyterian Church of Ardmore, PA.

ASDINE SAGATELIAN

Asdine N. Sagatelian of Ormond Beach, FL, died on January 25, 1989. She was born in 1910 in Istanbul, Turkey, of Armenian parents, Sarkis and Mannig Ketchian. She was educated in American missionary schools. She lived in Vienna for 22 years. While visiting



Asdine Sagatelian

relatives in the United States, she met and married Barkev Sagatelian, a well-known Armenian artist-designer and architect. For 22 years they made their home in Waldwick, NJ.

Survivors include her husband, Barkev; a brother, John Ketchian of Daytona Beach, FL; and a sister, Victoria Shahine Dilsizian of Long Island, NY.

REBECA MOUDJIAN

Submitted by Rev. Obed Boyadjian
Our beloved sister, Mrs. Rebeca Moudjian, has passed away being called to glory. She was the widow of our beloved brother, Levon, who was called home two years ago. Rebeca and Levon Moudjian formed a Christian family that has enriched the Armenian community of Montevideo with five children: Christina, Haigui, Alicia, Haigaz (who is president of the Council of the Primera Iglesia Evangélica Armenia del Uruguay) and Juan, as well as many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

In the face of the grief caused by her departure, we repeat the words of Revelation, "Blessed." Happy are those who live an authentic life grounded on the Eternal Rock, Jesus Christ, and based on real principles such as those lived by Rebeca within the family, the church and the community. Such a life has sense, and physical death is only a transition to Life Eternal with Christ and other beloved departed brethren. But, ". . . their works do follow them . . ."

WENDELL AND NEVARTE SMITH

Wendell Bristow Smith, 81, of Klamath Falls, OR, died on January 6, 1989, after a long illness.

Mr. Smith was born on August 3, 1907, in Portland, OR, to Henry and Sadie Smith, who were both blind.

He received bachelor's and master's degrees in English literature from the University of

Oregon, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa.

He did his doctoral work in philosophy at the University of Chicago and at Harvard College, Cambridge, MA.

He married Nevarte Manoogian of Everett, MA, in 1938.

Returning to Oregon that same year, Mr. Smith began teaching English and German at Klamath Union High School and served as assistant principal for 22 years.

After his retirement, he worked at the Klamath County and Oregon Institute of Technology libraries.

Mr. Smith wrote a number of articles on philosophy and translated the poetry of Goethe from German to English.

He was an active member of the choir at St. Paul's Episcopal Church and the Klamath County Historical Society.

The AMAA Board of Directors extend their heartfelt condolences to the families of the deceased through the medium of the AMAA NEWS.

- *Gulesian, Harry
Lynn, MA Jan. 12, 1989
 - *Nishan, Helen
Jackson Hts., NY Feb. 23, 1989
 - Salibian, Feride
Beirut, Lebanon March 7, 1989
 - Kasbarian, Alice
Watertown, MA March 9, 1989
 - *Algen, Cezar, Zevart
Silver Spring, MD March 13, 1989
 - Kartoziyan, Annie
Los Angeles, CA March 15, 1989
 - *Boudakian, Sophie
Oakland, CA March 17, 1989
 - *Fereshetian, Queenie
March 20, 1989
 - Gostanian, Virginia
Somerville, MA March 21, 1989
 - Manikian, Dorothy
MA March 26, 1989
 - *Asadorian, Sarah
Canoga Park, CA March 29, 1989
 - Antrasian, Alexander
Upper Darby, PA March 30, 1989
 - Hagopian, Jamileh
April 4, 1989
 - *Dohanian, Ira
Belmont, MA April 5, 1989
 - Keshishian, Richard
New York, NY April 8, 1989
 - Chorebanian, Diran
Watertown, MA April 22, 1989
 - *Paboojian, John
Arlington, MA April 24, 1989
 - *Nouskajian, James
Pasadena, CA April 29, 1989
 - Hatzikian, Marie
Los Angeles, CA May 1, 1989
 - Jerahian, Araxie
Paterson, NJ May 15, 1989
 - Nahigian, Ralph
Roslyn Heights, NY May 19, 1989
 - Samuel, Helen
N. Bergen, NJ May 21, 1989
 - *Nuyujukian, Hilda
Drexel Hill, PA May 25, 1989
 - *Atamian, Vartoche
Fairview, NJ May 27, 1989
 - *Seklejian, Nevart
Barsoumian, Sirvart
Afoltville, France
 - *Tufenkian, Paliadzou
Modesto, CA
- *Memorials were designated for AMAA.
**Bequest Assigned.

BIBLES FOR ARMENIA

The following are excerpts from letters and statements written by church leaders and Christian workers in Armenia.

"The physical need of the survivors of the catastrophic earthquake is great and critical, but their need for spiritual relief and comfort is greater and more critical."

"One way of providing for the spiritual relief of our people is to make the Word of God available to them. . . There is a new and unprecedented interest in the Christian faith and in the spoken, as well as the written Word of God. People find comfort, consolation and peace in the gospel of Jesus Christ. There are virtually thousands of people who are eager to have their own Bible."

"The need of our nation at the present time, besides lodging, food and clothing, is the Living Word of God—the Bible. . ."

"In most cases, when believers took clothing and financial help to the hospitals, the patients said, 'Please, more than clothing and financial help, we need the Word of God. Bring us Bibles!'"

"Once again, I thank God for the AMAA and for its 'Bibles for Armenia' project through which the Word of God, the 'Good News', is provided to our nation."

In light of the foregoing, the AMAA, along with its material assistance to the victims of the earthquake of last December, is making every effort to deliver as many Bibles as possible to Armenia for distribution to our people. After successfully delivering a shipment of 5,000 Bibles in May, the AMAA is now working in cooperation with the Armenian Evangelical Union of France on a larger shipment of 20,000 Bibles. This is an historical opportunity to make the comforting and reviving Word of God available to our people in our "Myre Hairenik."

WILL YOU HELP?

Your gifts will help to meet the challenge of sending more Bibles for Armenia. Please fill in the coupon below and mail it today.

Armenian Missionary Association of America, Inc.

140 Forest Avenue
Paramus, NJ 07652

Yes, I want to share in the "Bibles for Armenia" project.
Enclosed is my gift of \$_____.

Name _____

Address _____

City & State _____ Zip _____

Make checks payable to AMAA. One hundred percent of contributions are used for purchasing Bibles. All gifts are tax deductible.

GIVE AND RECEIVE

YOUR GIFT CAN MEAN CURRENT INCOME FOR YOU

You can maintain or even increase your income by making a "Life Income Gift" to the AMAA. Here's how it works:

- a. You transfer cash or stock to the AMAA and take a current tax deduction.
- b. You continue to receive, throughout your lifetime, the income from your gift.

If you have low-yielding or highly appreciated stock, you can even receive more income than before. Should you sell this stock yourself, you would have to pay a capital-gains tax of 28% or more. But the AMAA can sell the stock, pay no capital-gains tax, and re-invest the proceeds in stocks or bonds paying more interest or dividends than you are now receiving.

Therefore, a "Life Income Gift" to the AMAA may give you the following benefits:

- a. A lifetime income to the donor or donors.
- b. More income than before.
- c. Avoidance of capital-gains taxes.
- d. Income tax deductions.
- e. The Fund Management Services, at no cost to you, of the AMAA's skilled and experienced Investment Committee.

If you want more information about a "Life Income Gift," please call the AMAA at (201) 265-2607/2608.

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